rupee funds to the Russian cigarette factories on credit terms to enable them to purchase Indian tobacco. An Indian delegation would visit Russia shortly to pursue the matter and to explore opportunities for greater cooperation between the tobacco industries of the two countries.

Review of Swadeshi Plank

302. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have lately reviewed and revised their Swadeshi plank;

(b) if so, what is the revised Government policy regarding prioritisation and promotion of Swadeshi; and

(c) what steps have been and are being taken in the light thereof during the ensuing years under the Ninth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) to (c) The industrial policy of the Government has been spelt out in the Statement on Industrial Policy laid before the Parliament on 24.7.1991. The New Industrial Policy seeks to create an environment conducive to the growth of all sectors of industry, whether small, medium or large and belonging to public, private or cooperative sector. The Government is also committed to the development and utilisation of indigenous capabilities in technology and manufacturing and their upgradation to global standards. In pursuance of the policy to facilitate and foster the growth and development of Indian industry, the Government have taken a number of initiatives, which include the following:—

(i) The scope of delicensing has been widened. Barring six industries, the rest are exempt from industrial licensing.

(ii) Industries that do not require an industrial licence only have to submit an Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum (IEM) to the Secretariat for Industrial Assistance (SIA) in the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion. Amendments to IEM proposals have also been allowed with effect from 1.7.1998.

(iii) The locational policy has been streamlined to bring it in conformity with the liberalised licensing policy.

(iv) The Government has established the Dte. of Anti-Dumping and the Dte. of Safeguards. While the former militates against attempts by foreign suppliers to undercut the indigenous industry by recourse to unfair pricing of their products, the latter protects the domestic industries from a sudden surge in imports.

Decline in Agricultural Export

303. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for fall in agricultural export; and

(b) the steps taken to boost agricultural exports to help the farm sector as well as increase employment in the food processing related industries?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) International trade in agricultural commodities is dependent on prevailing international demand coinciding with domestic ability to supply, prevailing world prices of commodities, varieties being traded and consumer preferences. The value of agro items exported excluding marine products, tea, coffee, castor oil and cotton during the last three years is as below:

1997-98	Rs. 15169 crores	April—Oct. (1997-98)	Rs. 7457.58 crores
1998-99	Rs. 15960 crores	April—Oct. (1998-99)	Rs. 8712.62 crores
		April—Oct. (1999-2000)	Rs. 7202.78 crores

(b) Some of the steps taken/proposed to be taken specifically for enhancement of exports of agricultural and processed food products include:

1. Providing assistance for raising small and large nurseries for production of good quality planting material, upgradation of technical know-how of farmers through demonstrations, training and publicity, rejuvenation of old orchards, area expansion, supply of minikits for vegetables, improving productivity and training of farmers.
2. Provision of soft loans for setting up of grading/processing centres, auction platforms, ripening/curing chambers and quality testing equipment.
3. Providing financial assistance to exporters/growers/Cooperative Societies for development of infrastructural facilities such as purchase of specialised transport units, establishment of pre-cooling/cold storage facilities, integrated post-harvest handling systems (pack houses).